



## **Effective Use of Social Network and Technology in LIS Community for Information Delivery and Reach Out Programme : A Study**

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### **Introduction**

Government agencies are using Social Media platforms like Face book, twitter etc. more effectively and reach out to their stakeholders, understand their concerns and hear their voices. Unlike other traditional media, social media is more interactive and it enables one-to-one conversation. Also, as the perception of official and personal roles and boundaries is often blurred, people tend to share their concern and opinions without hesitation. Government now-a-days spends a lot of money on surveys seeking public opinions, options, likes and dislikes related to various welfare schemes, their implementation methodologies and services. Such tasks can be easily accomplished with the help of social media on one hand with a broader participation while saving the money on the other hand. (NIC, 2011)

One of successful model is the use of Face book by Delhi Traffic Police to report the incidents of violation and follow up action by the department. Governments' presence in the Cyberspace with over

7,000 websites can be leveraged today's fast life, more with integration of social media to these websites. However, it requires a well thought policy and action plan to address issues like authorization to speak on behalf of department/agency, technologies and platform to use to communicate, scope of engagement etc. Before implementing Library and Information Centers can also reach out its stake holders and markets. Its services provide information, mobile catalogue, mobile OPAC etc.

### **Social Networks What & Why**

In the knowledge society in addition to technical skills and access to information technologies, it is becoming increasingly important for people to have diversified and supportive social connections. Social Networking is the way in the 21st century for better communications. The term social networking refers to a process of relationship building among a group of people who have a common interest. Also social networking is the grouping of individuals into specific groups, like small rural communities, same professionals of common interest or a neighborhood subdivision. Although social networking is possible in person, especially in the workplace, institutions, organizations it is most popular way of online discussion. The internet is filled with millions of individuals who are looking to meet other people, to gather and share first hand information and experiences about golfing, gardening, aesthetics and cosmetic surgery, developing friendships or professional alliances, finding employment, business – to – business marketing etc. When it comes to online social networking websites are commonly known as social networking web sites and promote a number of social network services. It allows users to share ideas, activities, events and interests within the individual networks. In general social networking services allow users to create a profile for themselves and can be broken down into two broad categories. Internal Social Networking (ISN) and External Social Networking (ESN) (MySpace, Face book, Twitter and Bebo etc). Social network allows professionals to exchange information, opportunities and ideas. Professionals are able to stay informed with new knowledge about their field. Social networks are also



being used by teachers, lecturers and students as a communication tool. Because many students are already using a wide range of social networking sites, teachers and lecturers have begun to familiarize themselves with this trend and are now using it to their advantage. Teachers, lecturers and professors are doing everything from creating chat room forums and groups to extend classroom, discussion to posting assignments, tests and quizzes to assisting with homework outside of the classroom setting. Social networks are also being used to foster teacher – parent communication. These sites make it possible and more convenient for parents to ask questions and voice concerns without having to meet face to face.

The use of online social networks by libraries and information organizations is also increasingly prevalent and a growing tool that is being used to communicate with more potential library users, as well as extending the services provided to individual libraries. Various social networking sites like Face book, MySpace, Orkut etc are being used by library and information centers. These web sites help people to build up network and relationships among themselves. In addition to these sites, various web 2.0 techniques may also be used to develop better relationships among users and library professionals. Most of the library weblogs had some kind of statement of aims or purposes for the weblog and / or something about the intended audiences. Sometimes this was just a few words; sometimes a formal statement or short paragraph. But in present situation it has been a challenge for libraries to deliver the services as the users expect.

These followings are some ways how the social networks benefit the users

- Provide news or information for users
- Provide links to recommended Internet Resources
- Book reviews, information about new books
- Provide entertainment or amusement for users
- Provide news or information for librarians

- Book discussions
- Provide news or information for trustees
- Provide research tips
- Communication among professionals

## **Social Media and Library**

### **Communication**

Social media is another way that you can get into contact with your patrons. Contacting younger people is becoming increasingly difficult since a growing number of them believe that email is dead. Instead they use instant messaging, Face book, or SMS. It's a change in our way of thinking since many of us still do business primarily through email, but it's necessary to recognize this new trend.

### **Respond to Positive/Negative Feedback**

People are talking about your library on the web and in different social media channels. They're saying both good things and bad things. One of the most important tenets of customer service is to be responsive to your users' concerns or praise. Recognize them and show that you're interested in and care about their opinions. There's no controlling what is said about your library anymore, but you can influence the message that comes across. The screenshot below illustrates an example where a library could reach out and assist a patron:

### **Marketing/Advertising**

Your library likely already markets its services or events using traditional media: fliers, bookmarks, announcements in calendars of events, newspaper ads, press releases, etc. Social media is simply another form of media that you can use to get your message out there. Millions of people use social networks and likely a large percentage of the population you serve does too. You're missing out on a lot of eyes if you eschew social media.



### **Understanding Users Better**

Often people assume they know their user population. I know I do. But I'm also often very surprised at things I overhear or questions patrons ask. Social media allows conversations with your users, and these conversations often reveal important insights. Simply talking with people allows you to get to know them better, and more importantly, serve them better. Have conversations with patrons both in person and through social media. You'll be surprised at what you learn.

- Social Media has changed how patrons interact with the library.
- Social Media has given libraries new options for marketing their services.
- Social Media can be used as an avenue for change for libraries.
- Social Media can be used very effectively to advocate for libraries.
- Not every library will benefit from the same social media tools. You need to experiment to see what works for your library.

### **Top 10 Social Media and Libraries**



**Fig. 1:**

### **User Service Using Social Media**

We live in a digital age, in a technologically-connected society. Our customers are asking questions and wanting answers on social channels. Isn't it time for your Library to pick up the social

phone. It's find new ways to surprise & delight customers by bringing your service through social media. Socially savvy businesses seize the opportunity to listen to what people are saying online, and engaging with customers more efficiently and more cost-effectively than ever before.

Drowning in social media posts? Win your customers' trust and praise by providing an online experience that exceeds their expectations and anticipates their needs by using the Facebook, twitter and others social networks .Libraries will have mobile friendly websites or library related applications for mobile phones. Libraries will use you tube videos and other videos as a marketing channel and as an education medium. Libraries using social media to educate rather than just to market resources and services. More libraries will seek ways to create mobile apps for various uses and not just for the library website. As more database vendors create mobile apps, libraries will be able to offer more services to patrons via mobile. Book review sites such as GoodReads and LibraryThings will be used by more libraries as tools for offering book reviews and for locating new books to read. Libraries will adopt more open source programs for all aspects of running the library. More libraries will find ways to use online gaming as a marketing and educational tool. More libraries will use Google apps for a variety of functions including email.

**Mobile Applications & Apps** - this is a big one. Libraries will start using a variety of these this year including those designed for library websites as well as by library database vendors and other library related mobile applications. While content is exploding on the Net, our behavior pattern has changed. Being on the Web is like visiting a library. You can read in a library, but then you don't have to be there all the time and in fact, cannot be. Just as you borrow books from your library, apps like Readability help you organize the stuff you discover or subscribe to in a format that is convenient for your eyes, you're back or for your time. Some Examples of Apps are;

[www.readability.com](http://www.readability.com), [www.readitlaterlist.com](http://www.readitlaterlist.com), [www.zite.com](http://www.zite.com)

Google has an app called Currents ([www.google.com/producer/currents](http://www.google.com/producer/currents)) that does pretty much the same stuff for tablets and



smartphones, with different variants for Android and Apple platforms. These apps are revolutionizing the way we consume Web content. The future is in convenience and customization of content. Even the major publisher, database vendor and library and its opac is easily available in apps (<http://worldcatmobile.org/>), <http://www.ebscohost.com/schools/mobile-access>.

**QR Codes-** These are starting to show up and become popular in the business and marketing worlds and they will start to be used in libraries this year.

**Google Applications-** whether it's collaborating with Google docs, using Google voice for text messaging or any of the other Google applications. Google has a lot to offer libraries and more libraries will start using these.

**Twitter-** While more libraries may be using face book, in many ways, twitter can offer more to libraries especially when it comes to reference and instant answers to questions.

**Virtual reference-** While this is already offered at many libraries, new trends and offerings in the social media world make offering this service more practical than before. Whether it's installing an instant chat application on a face book fan page, using a live video site such as ustream.tv or one of the many other free applications available through social media, virtual reference is more doable and approachable than it has been in many years. Like, Comment Share of Face book comes in this category.

**Collaboration-** Increased collaboration between librarians at more than one institution as well as between faculty and librarians will occur thanks to social media tools that make this possible. Examples include twitter, twiddla, and many other white board and online sharing applications. Time Line in Facebook comes under the Category.

**Teaching social media classes-** Using social media as a teaching tool and not just as a tool for library promotion. New applications by library vendors such as lib guides and gale and many others make this possible and we will only continue to see even more of these in 2011.

**Group Communication & Community.** Professional community can be created using social network here is some example;

- **LIS Express-** LIS-Xpress is a service to the LIS community, related to the recent developments, current vacancies, ongoing issues etc. The community is solely devoted FOR the development, OF the development & BY the development of the LIS Community. (<http://www.facebook.com/groups/168392606566830/>)
- **Young Library Association-** The aims and purpose to establish the YLA are: To contribute to the professional and career development of all library personnel by conducting workshops and arranging programs. Promotion of library science education and the improvement in the training of libraries in India. To promote and advocate for the interests of professionals and the all libraries. (<http://www.facebook.com/groups/samimanzil1/members/>)

### **What other Trends in Libraries and Social Media did We Miss?**

*Communication- Blogs:* Blogger, Drupal, Expression Engine, Live Journal, Open Diary, Type Pad, Vox, Word Press, Xanga

*Microblogging-* Dailybooth, FMyLife, Foursquare, Google Buzz, Identi.ca, Jaiku, Nasza-Klasa.pl, Plurk, Posterous, Touch My2i, Qaiku, Tumblr, Twitter

*Location Based social networks:* Facebook places, Foursquare, Geoloqi, Google Latitude, Gowalla, The Hotlist, Yelp, and Inc.

*Events-* Eventful, the Hotlist, Meetup.com, Upcoming, Yelp, Inc.

*Information Aggregators-* Netvibes, Twine (website)

*Online Advocacy and Fundraising-* Causes, Jumo, Kickstarter, IndieGoGo

*Social networking-* ASmallWorld, Bebo, Chatter, Cyworld, Diaspora, Facebook, Google+, Hi5, Hyves, IRC, LinkedIn, Mixi, MySpace, Netlog, Ning, Orkut, Plaxo, Tagged, Tuenti, XING

*Content Management Systems:* E107 (CMS), Drupal, Joomla, Plone, Siteforum, Wordpress



*Diagramming and Visual Collaboration:* Creately

*Document Managing and Editing Tools:* Docs.com, Dropbox.com, GoogleDocs, Syncplicity  
*Social bookmarking (or social tagging):* CiteULike, Delicious, Diigo, GoogleReader, StumbleUpon, folkd

*Social Media Gaming:* Empire Avenue

*Social navigation:* Trapster, Waze

*Social news:* Digg, Chime.In (formerly Mixx), Newsvine, NowPublic, Reddit

*Wikis:* PBworks, Wetpaint, Wikia, Wikidot, Wikimedia, Wikispaces, Wikinews

## **Entertainment**

*Game sharing:* Armor Games, Kongregate, Miniclip, Newgrounds

*Media and entertainment platforms:* Cisco Eos, Myspace, Youtube

*Virtual worlds:* Active Worlds, Forterra Systems, Second Life, The Sims Online, World of Warcraft, RuneScape

## **Multimedia**

*Livecasting:* Blip.tv, Justin.tv, Live stream, oovoo, OpenCU, Skype, Stickam, Ustream, Youtube

*Music and audio sharing:* Bandcamp, ccMixer, Groove Shark, The Hype Machine, imeem, Last.fm, MySpace Music, Pandora Radio, ReverbNation.com, ShareTheMusic, Soundclick, SoundCloud, Spotify, Turntable.fm

*Photography and art sharing:* deviantArt, Flickr, Photobucket, Picasa, SmugMug, Zoomr, Webshots

*Presentation sharing:* Prezi, scribd, SlideShare

*Video sharing:* Dailymotion, Metacafe, NicoNicoDouga, Openfilm, sevenload, Viddler, Vimeo, YouTube

## **Reviews and Opinions**

*Business reviews:* Customer Lobby, Yelp, Inc.

*Community Q&A*: ask.com, Askville, EHow, Quora, Stack Exchange, WikiAnswers, Yahoo! Answers.

### Conclusion

“You can have the best technology in the world, But if you do not have a community who wants to use it. And who are excited about it, and then it has no purpose”.

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